General Assembly

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Agenda item 119 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.2)*]

56/155. The right to food

The General Assembly,

Recalling all Commission on Human Rights resolutions in this regard, in particular resolution 2000/10 of 17 April 2000,[1] and taking note of Commission resolution 2001/25 of 20 April 2001,[2]

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[3] which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for her/his health and well-being, including food,

Recalling further the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[4] in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

Recalling the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition,[5]

Bearing in mind the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit,[6]

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated,

Recognizing that the problems of hunger and food insecurity have global dimensions and that they are likely to persist and even to increase dramatically in some regions unless urgent, determined and concerted action is taken, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the stress on natural resources,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[3] Resolution 217 A (III).

[4] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[5] *Report of the World Food Conference, Rome, 5–16 November 1974* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3), chap. I.

[6] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the World Food Summit, 13–17 November 1996* (WFS 96/REP), part one, appendix.

Reaffirming that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, at both the national and the international level, is the essential foundation which will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

Reiterating, as did the Rome Declaration, that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures that are not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that endanger food security,

Convinced that each State must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals in implementing the recommendations contained in the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Food Summit and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security in a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies where coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential,

Stressing the importance of reversing the continuing decline of official development assistance devoted to agriculture, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity and therefore requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;

2. *Also reaffirms* the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger so as to be able fully to develop and maintain their physical and mental capacities;

3. *Considers* it intolerable that 826 million people, most of them women and children, throughout the world and particularly in developing countries, do not have enough food to meet their basic nutritional needs, which infringes upon their fundamental human rights and at the same time can generate additional pressures on the environment in ecologically fragile areas;

4. *Encourages* all States to take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right to food, including steps to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and, as soon as possible, to enjoy fully the right to food, and to elaborate and adopt national plans to combat hunger;

5. *Stresses* the need to make efforts to mobilize and optimize the allocation and utilization of technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, and to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies;

6. *Urges* States to give adequate priority in their development strategies and expenditures to the realization of the right to food;

7. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations Children's Fund on early childhood entitled *The State of the World's Children, 2001*,[7] and in this context recalls that the nurturing of young children merits the highest priority;

8. *Takes note with appreciation* of the preliminary report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to food,[8] submitted in

[7] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.XX.1.

[8] See A/56/210.

accordance with Commission resolution 2001/25, and commends the Special Rapporteur for his valuable work in the promotion of the right to food;

9. *Supports* the realization of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur as established by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolutions 2000/10 and 2001/25;

10. *Emphasizes* the request of the Commission on Human Rights to the Special Rapporteur to contribute effectively to the medium-term review of the implementation of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit[6] by submitting to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights his recommendations on all aspects of the right to food;

11. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur to mainstream a gender perspective in the activities relating to his mandate;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the necessary human and financial resources for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;

13. *Welcomes* the work already done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food, in particular its General Comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food (article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), in which the Committee affirmed, inter alia, that the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfilment of other human rights enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights, and is also inseparable from social justice, requiring the adoption of appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both the national and international levels, oriented to the eradication of poverty and the fulfilment of all human rights for all;[9]

14. *Also welcomes* the convening by the High Commissioner at Bonn, from 12 to 14 March 2001, of the Third Expert Consultation on the Right to Food, with a focus on implementation mechanisms at the country level, hosted by the Government of Germany, and takes note with interest of the report of this meeting;[10]

15. *Supports* the recommendation that the High Commissioner organize a fourth expert consultation on the right to food, with a focus on the realization of this right as part of strategies and policies for the eradication of poverty, inviting experts from all regions;

16. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to submit a comprehensive report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-eighth session and an interim report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution;

17. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies and non-governmental organizations to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfilment of his mandate, inter alia, through the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;

18. *Decides* to continue the consideration of this matter at its fifty-seventh session under the agenda item entitled "Human rights questions".

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001

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[9] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2* and corrigendum (E/2000/22 and Corr.1), annex V, para. 4.

[10] E/CN.4/2001/148.